· ISSUE NO. 4 ·

10/2025

MAPU TALES

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

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MAPU
TALES

ENJOY!

FROM THE EDITORS

MAPU — a word from the Mapudungun language spoken by the Mapuche people of southern Chile and Argentina — means “land” or “earth.” It speaks to roots, belonging, and our bond with the places we call home.
MAPU TALES are tales of the earth. It is a space for sharing stories—whether travel experiences, practical tips, or sports adventures—that often go unnoticed in the rush of everyday life.

In a world that never stops scrolling, take a moment to pause—and give yourself the space for a slower, more thoughtful read. On that note, we invite you to explore the stories we've gathered. The journey of preparing and printing a magazine is no small feat, but with creativity, stamina, and your support, we continue to make it happen—page by page.

JOANNA & BJÖRN POLLUL

TO HELP US CREATE MORE ISSUES GO HERE

PHOTO OF THE ISSUE

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PRINT'S NOT DEAD!
BUT COSTLY

IT TAKES A LOT OF EFFORT TO PREPARE, CREATE, AND PUBLISH A MAGAZINE, BUT WE DO IT OUT OF PASSION.
WE ALSO VALUE PRINTED MAGAZINES - TAKING A BREAK FROM SCREENS, ENJOYING A CUP OF COFFEE, AND FEELING THE PAGES IN YOUR HANDS.
WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE STILL PEOPLE WHO APPRECIATE PRINT AS MUCH AS WE DO. SO HELP US FUEL THE STORIES AND MAKE THE MAGIC OF PRINT FOR MAPU TALES. FOR MORE INFORMATION: MAPUTALES.BLOGSPOT.COM OR PATREON.COM/MAPUTALES

MAPU TALES
ABOVE 70°N
THANK
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HELP THE PRINT, GET THE PRINT

SHARE YOUR STORY WITH US, SHARE IT WITH THE WORLD!

What began as a two-person project has steadily expanded—and with this issue, we're excited to feature even more voices. A growing group of authors have joined us in shaping MAPU TALES, and we couldn't be happier to share their stories. We hope this space continues to grow, and we'd love to hear yours too. Every journey has a story worth telling—so....

WHAT'S YOUR TALE?

GOT A PERFECT SHOT?

Tell your story by sending us a picture for the photo of the issue.

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

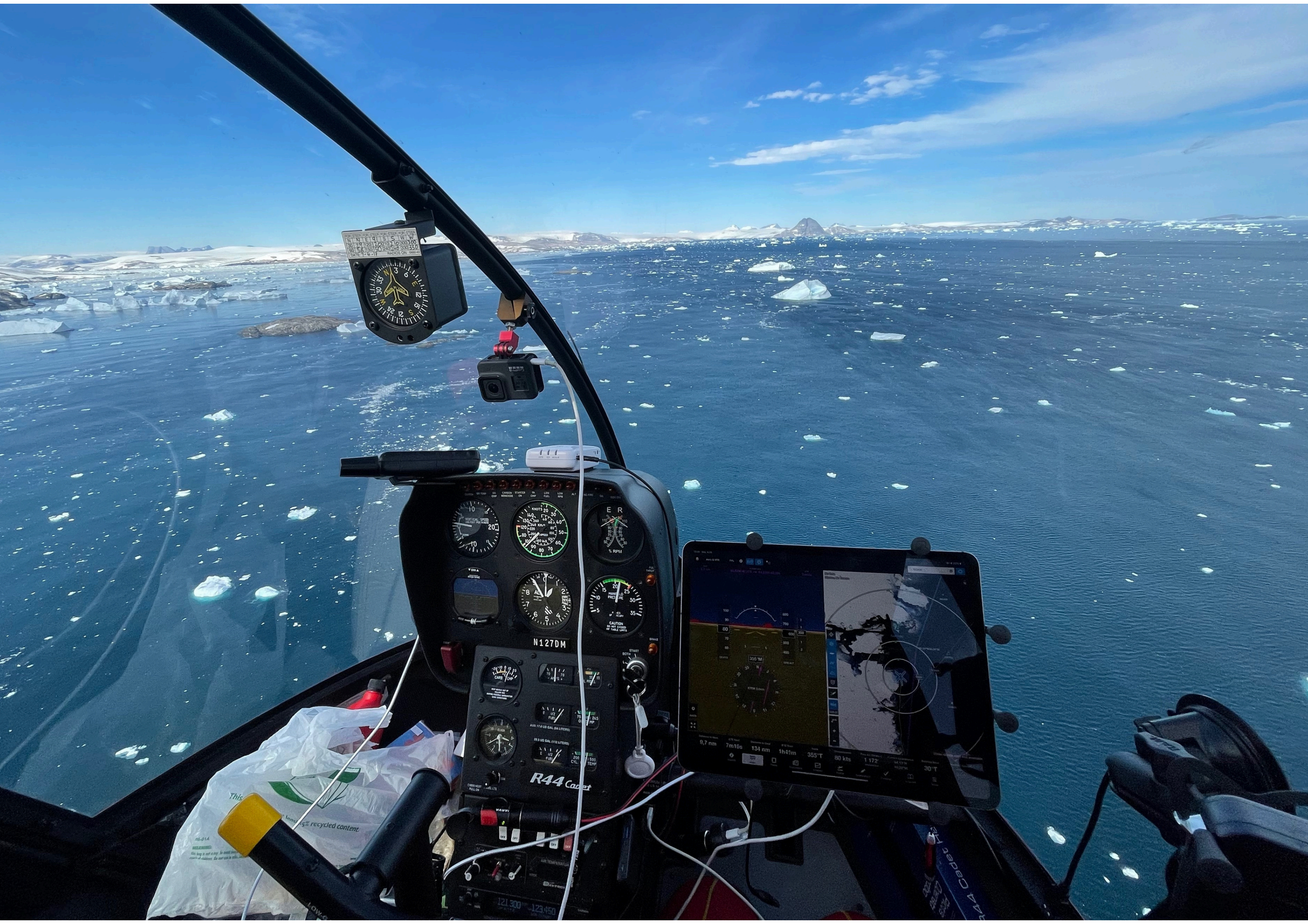
PIOTR WILK

WRITTEN BY
JOANNA & BJÖRN POLLUL

Pilot: *Kraków Information, good evening.*
Kraków Information: *Kraków Information, hello.*
Pilot: *Kraków Information, shortly before the sector boundary near Radomsko, operating from Chicago to Kraków, squawk 5762, 4,500 feet.*
Kraków Information: *... Say the departure point again, please, because I'm speechless.*
Pilot: *From Chicago, Illinois, with the last leg from Stockholm.*

The tower probably wasn't expecting that, judging by their reaction. And no wonder — considering the type of aircraft, anyone who recognized it would have been wide-eyed.

wykonuję z Chicago do Krakowa



That's how Piotr, who lately shared with us a few words about this enormous endeavor, was welcomed back to Poland in the cockpit of his Robinson R44. With only slightly less surprise from the tower, Piotr also touched down at Salzburg Airport. He was on his way to Cannes, but Salzburg (where we stayed back then) has its own aviation gems worth seeing. As you can imagine, having a friend drop by in a helicopter was quite a highlight for us — and we're even happier that, thanks to his short stopover, we're able to share his story with you now.

Today, many aircraft cross the Atlantic, but those machines are powerful, with large fuel tanks that make such ranges routine. It's a very different story to attempt this journey in a small, very light helicopter with a maximum takeoff weight of less than one tonne. Such an aircraft must be specially prepared, and the required modifications bring with them layers of bureaucracy—which, as we all know, can be... challenging. After altering some technical items like adding additional tank and some other adjustments he set off on a great but demanding adventure.

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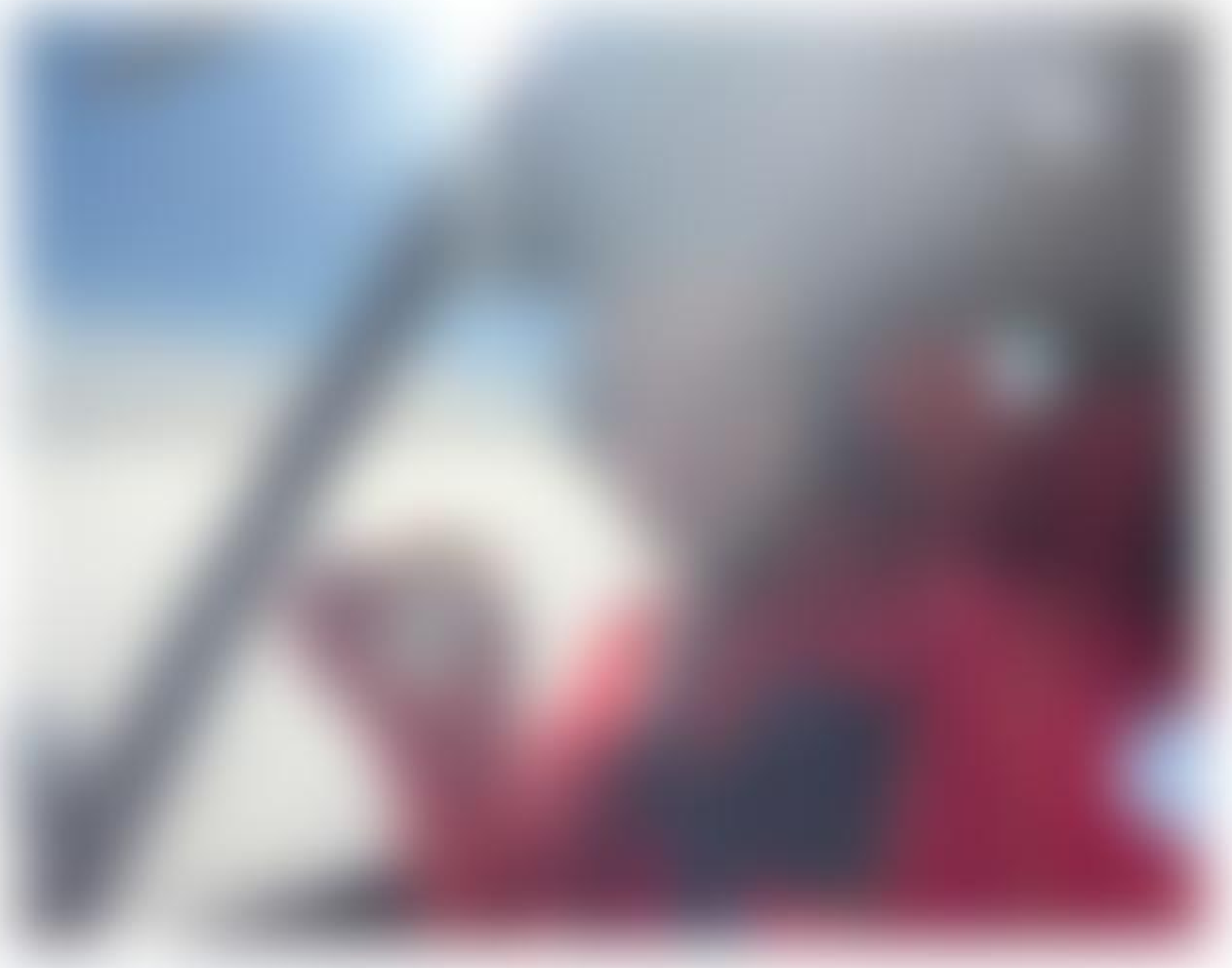

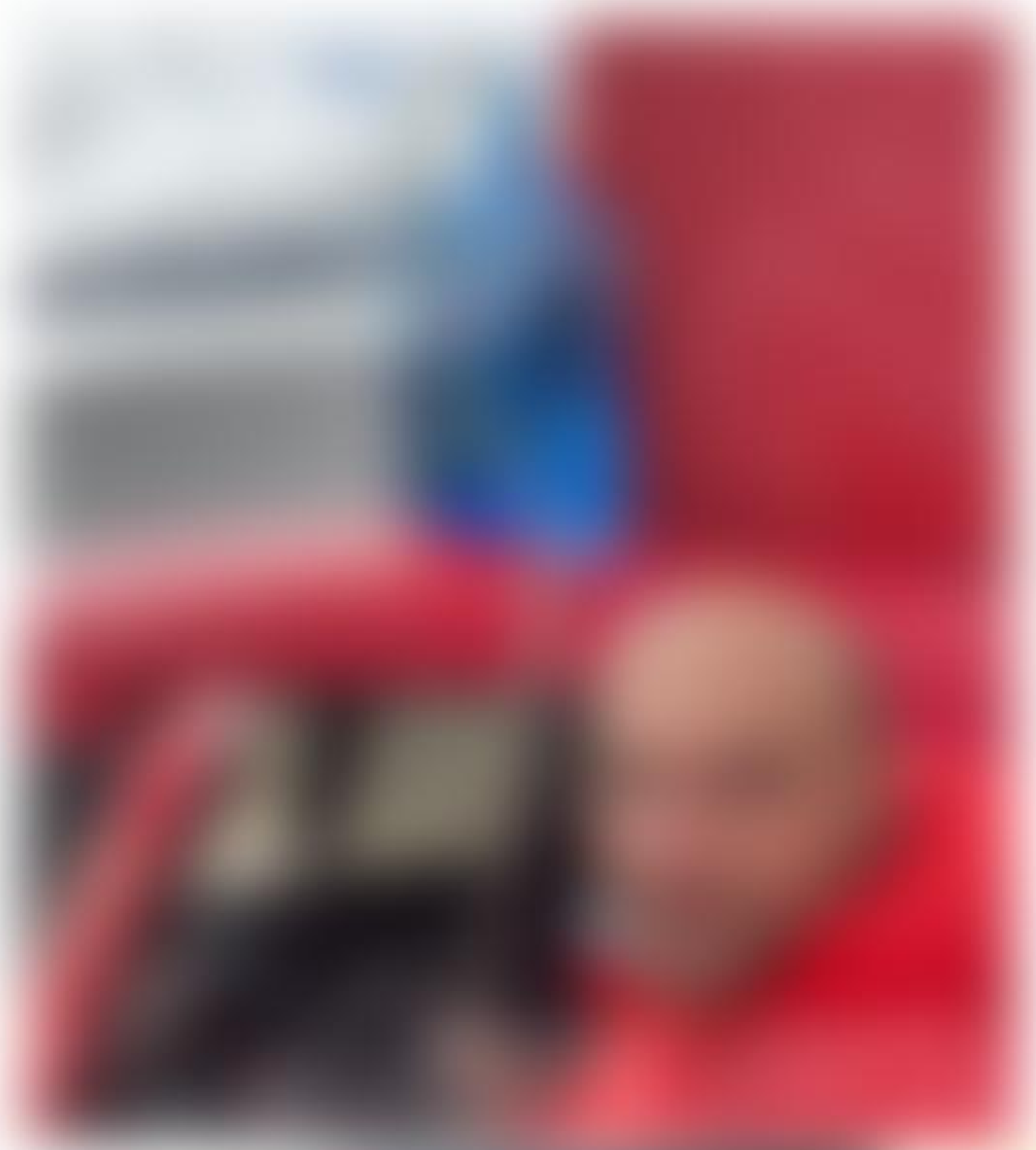

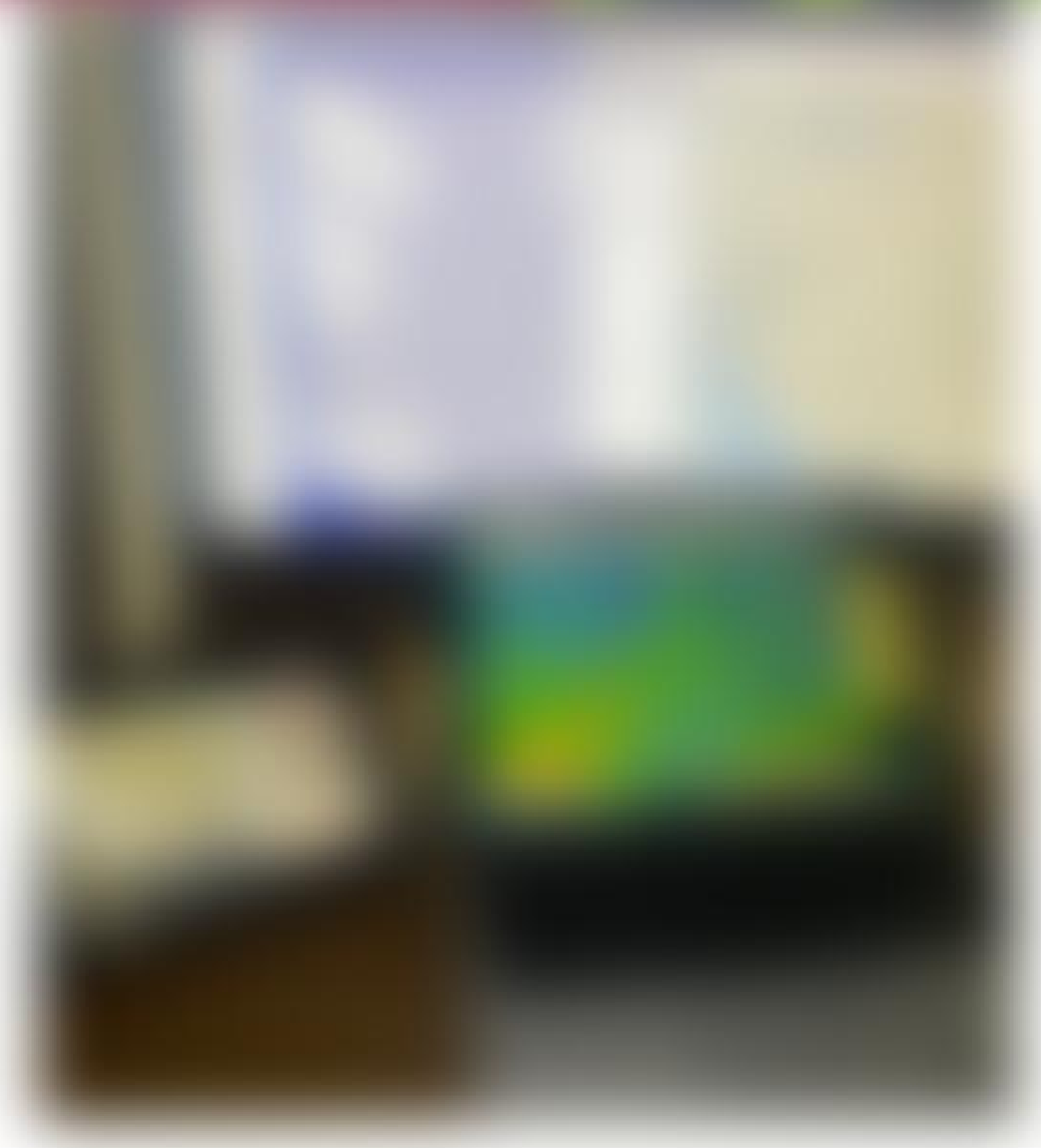

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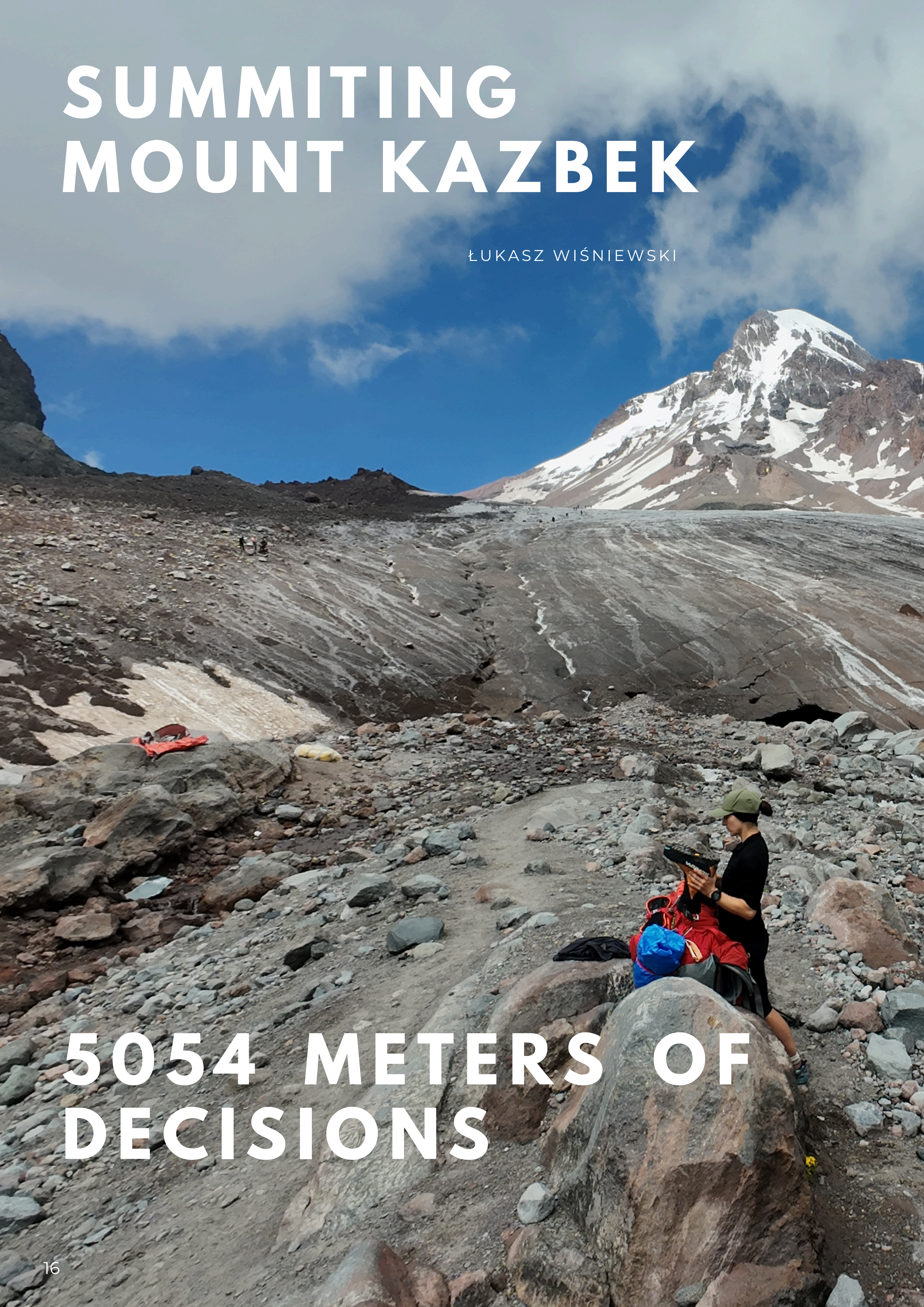
SUMMITING MOUNT KAZBEK

ŁUKASZ WIŚNIEWSKI

5054 METERS OF DECISIONS



> "KAZBEK IS A MAGICAL MOUNTAIN. ONCE
> YOU SEE IT, IT RETURNS IN YOUR DREAMS.
> GEORGIANS BELIEVE IT IS THE PLACE
> CLOSEST TO GOD."
> – WOJCIECH GÓRECKI, TOAST ZA PRZODKÓW.

The decision to go to Kazbek had been maturing within me for a long time. It wasn't an escape from everyday life, but a natural result of the changes that opened up space for what I had been missing – the mountains.

It all started with the Tatras, where I learned responsibility, organization, and humility before the mountains. Every trip – from Rysy in winter to Orla Perć – strengthened my conviction that this was something more than just tourism. In the granite walls, a decision was born: it's time to try the Caucasus.

At first, I thought about an organized expedition, but I quickly realized that I didn't want "Kazbek all inclusive." I wanted to experience this mountain independently – to plan the date, gear, logistics, and to find a climbing partner. I knew there was no room for recklessness – the glacier demands responsibility.

I chose full independence: a tent instead of shelters, my own decisions instead of ready-made solutions. For three months, I refined the details, gathered equipment, so that today I can say: I am ready.

Georgia was the natural choice – wild and hospitable, yet friendly enough to make the expedition easier. Georgians welcome travelers with openness, which gives a sense of safety. I didn't go into a detailed gear list, since getting from an idea to a ready backpack is something best discovered on your own.

DAY ONE – DEPARTURE
WARSAW, SATURDAY, JULY 19, 2025

The adventure began back in Warsaw. Our flight to Tbilisi was scheduled for 10:20, but after lingering too long over coffee, we nearly missed the plane. We dashed into the departures hall at the last moment, only to be met with another surprise – a breakdown of European radar systems. The takeoff was delayed by two hours.

At last, we were airborne. Below us stretched Georgia – a land between Europe and Asia, a bridge-country that escapes simple definitions.

At the airport in Tbilisi, the heat hit me like a wave – 35 degrees. Instead of heading straight into the mountains, we first caught a bus into the city center. The city surprised me immediately – green lawns despite the blazing heat, well-kept streets, and in people's faces a mix of cultures and histories from across the region. My partner, Marek – whom I had met through a mountain group – struck me at first as a straightforward, laconic man, experienced on European peaks, with Ararat already behind him. His quietness seemed to me a good trait – in the mountains, sometimes silence is the best companion.

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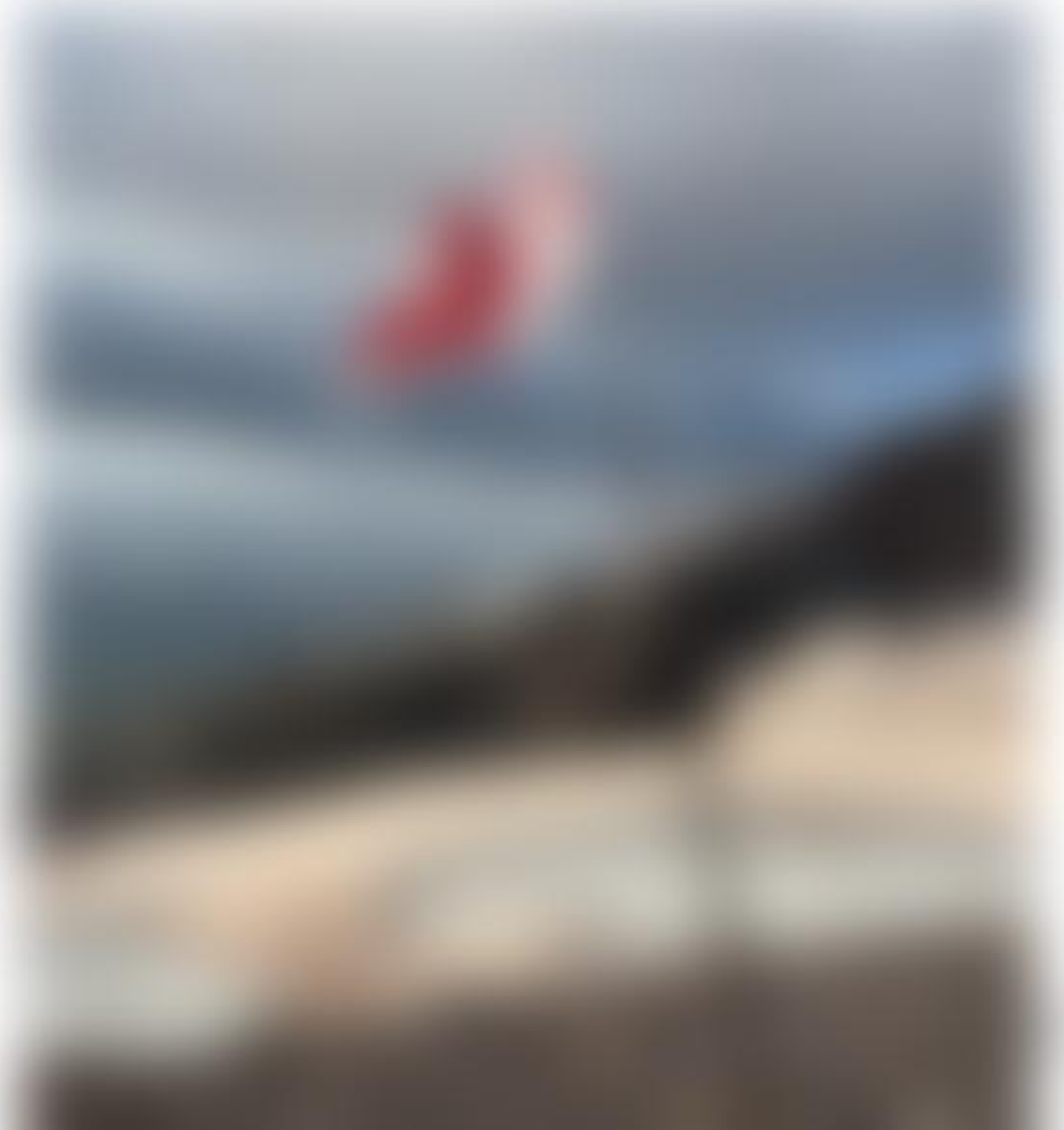

TATRAS: A COMPACT RANGE OF WONDERS

There is a place where dwarf mountain pine has probably saved more hikers and climbers than anywhere else in the world. Why? Because it often provides the last bit of shelter during a hailstorm, or the only anchor strong enough to secure a rope—something I've personally experienced, both in summer and winter. It also smells wonderful, especially in late spring or when the weather is good. To me, it smells like home.

The home of this plant is the Tatra Mountains, at the southern edge of Poland. But the pine doesn't recognize borders—it spreads confidently into Slovakia as well.

Spring is also a beautiful time to visit, but it's important to respect the natural rhythms of the mountains. This is when bears begin to emerge from hibernation—usually between late February and April—so encounters, while rare, are possible. Some trails may also be temporarily closed during this period to protect wildlife during sensitive times, such as the mating or nesting seasons of species like chamois or certain birds. Marmots, which hibernate for over half the year, also reappear in spring.

For hiking, there are plenty of routes to choose from. You can use mapa-turystyczna.pl (in Polish, but quite intuitive), or look for a guidebook in your language.

Interestingly, the Tatras are often described as the smallest high mountain range in the world. Strictly speaking, they are not the smallest, but they are exceptionally compact. They contain nearly all the features you'd expect in the Alps or the Rockies, just in a much more condensed form.

Sharp, towering granite dominates the landscape, making it a paradise for climbers. But in my opinion, the Tatras also offer some of the most beautiful trails for hiking and running.

I'm not even sure I should promote this place—it's become very crowded in summer. But if you visit in autumn or early winter (always well-prepared, of course!), you might just fall in love with it too. The Tatras are also one of the greatest areas in Europe for ski touring, but since this subject is very dear to me, I'll leave it for another time.

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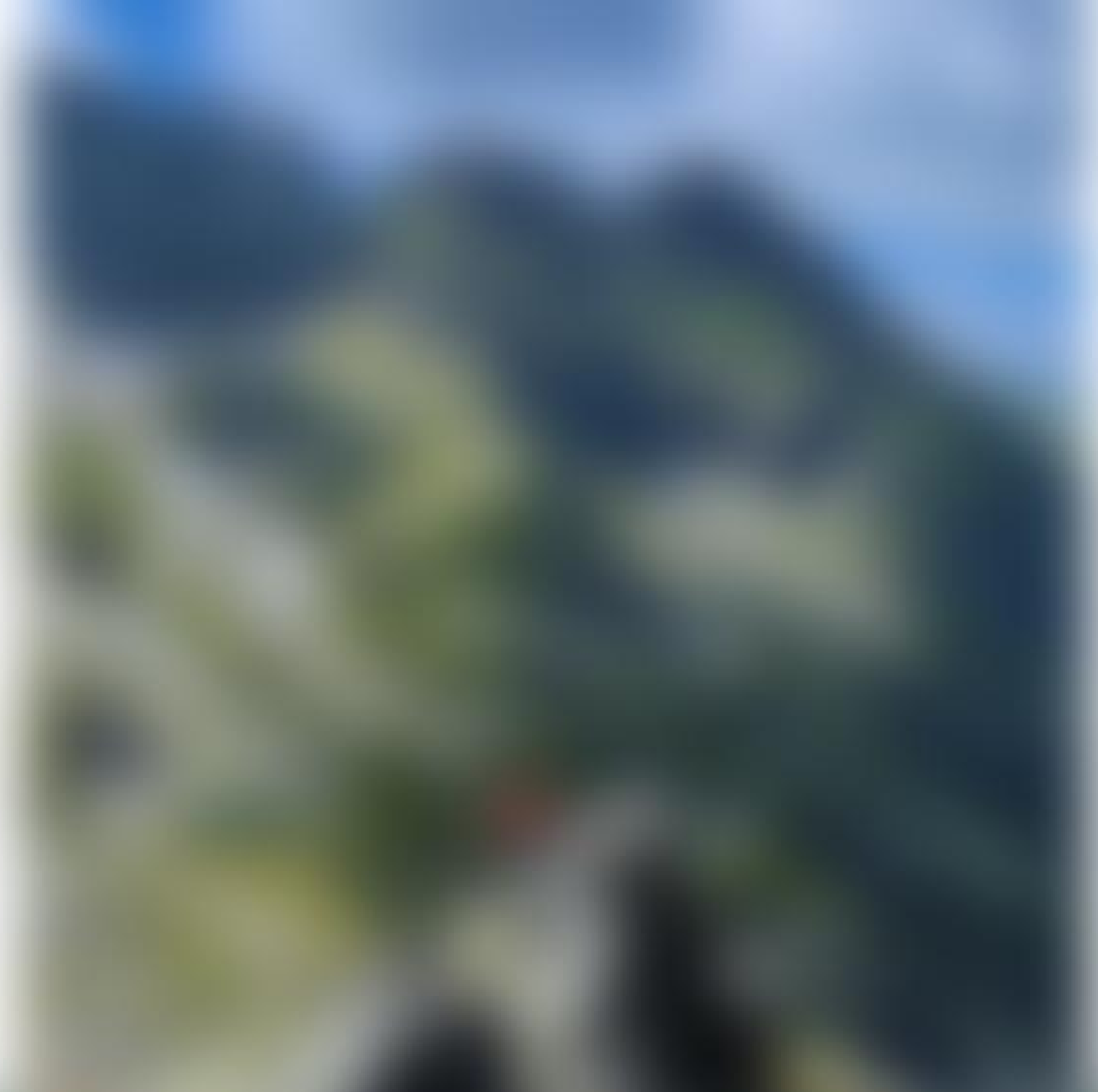

ALP DE COUSIN – TRANSALP BIKING TOUR

EVA FÜNFGELD

ABOUT COMPANIONSHIP, WEATHER MOODS, AND NUTCAKE

I am an MTB guide. For 25 years I've been carrying my bike – sometimes also my guests' – over passes. Reading lines, thinking ahead, finding rhythm, collecting altitude. This time everything was different: Judith, my cousin and mountaineer, wanted her first multi-day bike trip. From Davos via Livigno to Zernez it wasn't the distance, but togetherness that became the true summit joy.

EXPEDITION 2680 M - WINTER'S ONSET APPROACHING

Planning, deciding, waiting, starting. Radar app, hut warden, good gear – the day will be both magnificent and merciless. Judith's shoes? Tuned with plastic bags, half rescued at the Dürrboden stove. Then the adventure: soaked ground, nothing rideable. In short breaks against the cold we trudge toward the Scaletta Pass. Snow. Silence. Focus. Energy ball, icy bottle water – onward. Three and a half hours of trail-breaking through a stage of mountain giants and whistling marmots. In total seven hours on the move: lifting, pushing, shaking off. Wonder. Endurance. Staying in the moment. At the top, the view tears open. Below, the hut awaits. Applause. We are the last – and the happiest.

MORNING LIGHT OVER LIVIGNO, A QUIET PROMISE

Alpisella Pass and e-bike rush hour. A steaming caravan uphill, friendly greetings. We breathe in the rhythm of the others, make space, say thank you. Companionship begins with a glance and ends in respect.

At Lago di Cancano: gray rock, turquoise water, a sky full of stories. Kiosk, bus stop – wilderness meets convenience. Buy water, move on. Posture instead of purism: be mindful, leave nothing behind except traces that rain washes away.

Then Val Mora. The trail hugs the slope, meadows glow, rocks glisten. I look back: Judith – calm, clear. Coming from the vertical, she finds her line on gravel and roots. No big words. Only attention. A sign, a nod – our language today.

On the alp: nut cake. The innkeeper serves plates like stories. Winter, wind, wolf. We drink, laugh, fall silent. A cloud drifts in, the wind shifts. Layer up, swap gloves, move on. Contentment doesn't come with perfect weather, but with composure.

The Ofen Pass lives up to its name: steep, honest. The burn in the calves – an old friend. Judith pedals calmly, without complaint. Words are scarce: drink, breathe, go. At the top the light plays, clouds sail. Two dots in the wind – just right.
The last twelve kilometers are an exhale. Asphalt, rolling lines, humming wheels. Zernez, two minutes before store closing. Chips, nuts, two cold beers. Sitting on the curb, helmets beside us, exhausted laughter. There are goals – and there are those you can taste.

What remains? Not vertical meters and steepness. But how you travel: consideration on the trail, a quick stop for gloves, a glance at the sky, a pat on the shoulder at the crest. Companionship happens in passing – and it carries.
Judith, the mountaineer: a rock in motion. I, on the bike for 25 years, learn: a first day of an Alpencross has the same depth as a ridge. Respect for the mountain, respect for each other, joy in the moment. This day was not spectacle, but closeness – to nature, to the body, to each other. Legendary not through speed, but through the luxury of sharing it. With nut cake. Headwind. And a quiet thank you in the mind.
Thank you, dear cousin Judith.

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THE MAGIC OF A BONFIRE

...PINE CONES AND SAND.

Some of the best family memories aren't made in fancy resorts but on a simple campsite—pitching a tent together, cooking over a fire, and enjoying the little things. Camping strips life down to the basics, and that's often where the magic happens.

One of the most memorable vacations I had wasn't the one when we went to Greece or Spain. The trips I remember most are when we went to the Baltic coast with my family, or somewhere in the mountain ranges, setting up a big family tent and spending time camping. Even back then—which is already quite a while ago—it felt surprisingly comfortable with the equipment we had. And if there were some things or foods I didn't appreciate at the time, they now live rent-free in my memory as some of the best moments from those days.

One of those memories is the inflatable mat that kept losing air now and then. We discovered you could fix it with a simple pen cap, which actually fit the air outlet better than the original stopper. We didn't care—there was a wooden castle in the pine woods that served us as a fortress against the adults, and pine cones were our endless supply of ammunition. There were also nights when we slept on the beach—probably less legal than the cone wars... but at that age, it was all we needed.

I also remember the thrill of foxes coming too close and stealing our food, while the adults were deeply worried about rabies. In the end, everything turned out fine—we didn't catch any deadly illness, and all the pine cone battles were eventually forgiven.

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THE GALLEY

DEBORA LARA SALVATIERRA

THE GALLEY, JUST AS THE KITCHEN IN THE HOUSE, IS THE HEART OF THE BOAT —WHERE MEALS, MEMORIES, AND THE OCCASIONAL CHAOS HAPPEN. IT MAY BE SMALL, BUT IT HOLDS A BIG PLACE IN ALL OUR HEARTS!

HEARTY TOMATO SOUP – THE ULTIMATE CHILL-BUSTER FOR CAMPSITE

When exploring the great outdoors in our campervan, efficiency is key. With limited cooking facilities and storage space, we've mastered the art of simple yet satisfying meals. Our go-to recipes include pancakes, spaghetti carbonara, risotto, and grilled meats with salads.

One chilly day in Norway, my mother-in-law shared with us a recipe for tomato soup that has since become a staple in our campervan kitchen. This hearty soup is incredibly easy to make, requiring only one pot, minimal ingredients, and negligible storage space.... and also kids usually love it!

Today, I am excited to share this recipe with you.

1. Bring the water to a boil in a large pot, then add the chicken stock cube and spaghetti (if using). Cook until the spaghetti is al dente.
2. Add the concentrated tomato puree and stir well. Bring the mixture to a simmer.
3. To prevent the cream from curdling, mix it with a little hot soup in a separate bowl. Temper the cream, then add it to the tomato mixture. Stir until well combined.
4. Serve hot and enjoy!

This tomato soup is a crowd-pleaser, perfect for chilly autumn days. The ingredients are easily accessible in most countries, making it an ideal recipe for travelers. Give it a try and enjoy the warmth and comfort it brings!

~ 👤👤👤

- 1/2 liter water
- 1 chicken stock cube
- Spaghetti (optional)
- 250ml concentrated tomato puree (passata)
- 3 tablespoons 12% heavy cream

AND THE MOUNTAINS ABOVE YOU RISE LIKE THE SKY, AND THE SKY ABOVE YOU STRETCHES LIKE THE MOUNTAINS.”

— WOJCIECH BELLON

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